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## UA3/9/7 WKU Men's & Women's Swim & Diving Team

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## WKU Men's & Women's Swim & Diving Team

Fellow Faculty and Staff:

This morning, WKU Athletic Director Todd Stewart and I announced that we are suspending our Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving program for five years effective immediately. This action is both prudent and necessary following the conclusions reached in recent investigations by the Bowling Green Police Department and our Title IX Office. These investigations revealed flagrant violations of our Student Code of Conduct and sexual harassment policies. Specifically, the violations include hazing, underage alcohol consumption, and abuse, including engagement of perspective student athletes on recruiting visits to campus. Additionally, the investigations found that coaches were aware of this pervasive culture and failed to sufficiently eliminate inappropriate behavior within these teams.

Todd Stewart and I have addressed the Title IX issues and the personnel issues with this action. The Office of Student Judicial Affairs will handle matters with individual students related to the alleged violations of our Student Code of Conduct in accordance with the University's student judicial process. This process will take place over the next several weeks and will remain confidential.

It is important to note that the scholarships currently held by team members who remain in good academic and university standing will be honored. Those who wish to transfer to another institution will be allowed to do so and will be eligible to compete immediately.

What makes this action particularly difficult is the exemplary manner in which our Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving teams have performed in the classroom and in the pool. Nine members of these teams were just named to the Conference USA Commissioner's Medal for the 2014-15 academic year. These medals are given to Conference USA student athletes who have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or better. Thirty-four members of these two teams were just named to the Conference USA Commissioner's Honor Roll for this year, which means they have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. The men won a Conference USA Swimming and Diving Championship this year, and the women finished second. They have represented WKU with distinction in the classroom and in competition, but sadly their collective behavior outside of the classroom and the pool merits this serious disciplinary action.

When students choose to participate in a formally recognized WKU organization, regardless of the nature of that organization, they become responsible for their actions, both as individuals and as a group. This University simply will not tolerate indecent, immoral, physical, or mental acts of disrespect or abuse among our students. We must all embrace a culture where every student is as important as any student. When this culture is not embraced, we will act swiftly and firmly to ensure that the dignity and integrity of the institution is sustained. It is our hope that over the next five years, the pervasive culture of misconduct and lack of sufficient oversight in this program will be flushed from our campus life.

Thank you for your patience while we allow this investigation process to run

a full, complete, and objective course. These actions are final. Thank you.

Gary A. Ransdell



Dr. Gary A. Ransdell | President